

Surveying the Future – Contributions to Economic, Environmental and Social Development in Urban and Rural Areas

Prof. Holger MAGEL, President of FIG
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Your Excellency Minister for Economic Affairs, dear hosts, distinguished guests and delegates, friends of FIG and our sister organizations IAG, ICA, ISM, exhibitors, first of all many thanks to our local hosts for their invitation to come to Indonesia, thanks to all participants for coming. We are happy to be here with our Indonesian friends. My feeling was right in Marrakech, dear Rudolf Matindas, that we will have an excellent event – Jakarta is a most important place for geodetic and surveying activities!

Surveying the future – what a challenging and fascinating motto! Maybe that some of you have got some doubts about the technical implementation or procedure of surveying the unknown and not yet existing future, which you neither can see nor touch. *Surveying the future* – is it a “mission impossible”? I think this motto should encourage us to think and to discuss about the future and our visions to cope it. Not in the sense of “What will come” but in the sense of the well-known philosopher Sir Karl Popper who once has urged us to ask “What should we in future do, to possibly make the world a little better?”.

As you can see in the second part of our conference motto FIG already has an idea or even visions how to build a better world: By contributions to economic, environmental and social development in urban and rural areas, either here in Indonesia, in one of the biggest countries and populations of the world, or for example in the small Lebanon or in Slovenia, those two FIG member countries, which I have visited most recently. Our FIG vision is to contribute to a more sustainable world!

Indonesia is without any doubt the best example and location to shortly describe the “mission possible” of FIG as the leading umbrella organization of all surveying and all surveyors and the future role of surveyors in the society.

II.

Let me at the same time make a *short midterm review* of my four years term presidency to better point out central aspects:

During my numerous travels around the world and meetings with global and national politicians and institutions I fortunately could experience the “very good standing” of FIG as a globally acknowledged NGO and as a reliable partner. As the role of the civil society is growing more and more we, the International Federation of Surveyors, will have a good

future. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has recently published his report on the “*Implementation of the Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on UN-Civil Society Relations*”. He has emphasised some very important issues directly affecting the work and mission of FIG and of its nearly 100 member associations:

- He appeals for expanding and deepening the relationship with NGOs;
- He wants to push the UN organization to become a more “outward-looking organization”;
- He sees a need for the UN to “connect the global with the local” – by this the expression “*glocalisation*” comes into my mind;
- He wants to enhance the “country-level” engagement with NGOs and consequently;
- He finally wants to ask the governments and others enhancing the capacity of NGOs at the country level.

So far so very good. FIG seems to look at a splendid future with assets like global-local focus (example for *glocalisation*!) and since its establishment in 1878 with assets like looking outward, now looking out – and inward with great deliberation and intension at the Asian and the Pacific region at this 3rd FIG Regional Conference 2004. As you may remember we have firstly started in Sub-Saharan “black” Africa (Nairobi 2001), then we were last year in the North African – Arab world (Marrakech 2003). Next year we will move on regionally to Central and Latin America having the conference in Havana, Cuba in September 2005.

Once again so far so very good. But – and this is my restriction or reservation: Still too often during my visits and talks, it happens that political and economic leaders and even some other NGOs did not know enough what FIG and surveyors stand for in the 21st century. It is surely right that we do represent one of the oldest and – look for example at the annual Nile floods in the old Egypt – one of the most important professions for daily life, growing economy and social justice. We are proud of this fact. But does this mean that we have remained on pure measurement, mapping or cadastral administration or in taxation etc. issues? Still too many policy makers and even the society have not recognised enough that our old profession has developed to one of the premier leading high-tech professions acting on sea, land and even in outer space. Too few leaders still don’t know that the old profession of surveying and geodesy has broadened its ranges like it is described in the metaphor “*from surveying to serve society*”. Surveying 2004 stands for high-tech and for high “spirit to serve” (like JW Marriott’s motto!) in favour of the economic, environmental and social, i.e.: sustainable development. A lot of lessons learnt have proved that our contributions are a precondition for a more just and peaceful world. You must only ask the World Bank people or people from the UN – they will confirm this. Again and again we must deliver this good message to the national and local governments, to the economy, to the public and to civil society, again and again we in the current FIG Council want to deliver everywhere the message of the “*Partner Surveyor*” to the global, regional and local institutions.

Therefore we are going on to deepen our partnership with the UN authorities and other global players like the World Bank. Therefore we are going on to encourage countries to strengthen the voice of member associations for surveyors. But before – we must start to formulate a

common voice of all surveyors, geodesists, photogrammetrists, cartographers and other members of the family of related experts. It is an honour for me to welcome the presidents or representatives of IAG, ISM and ICA to this conference. We are happy about the presence of the distinguished persons of the UN and the WB.

III.

In the middle of my term I am quite confident that with the support and spirit of our members and the external partners we can even strengthen our efforts in “*Shaping the change*” and broadening and deepening our competences and various contributions to implement e.g. the Millennium development goals everywhere. I agree with the recently elected German President and former Director General of the International Monetary Fund Prof. Horst Köhler. He has said: “*The eradication of poverty is the biggest challenge for stability and peace in the 21st century.*” He continued as a friend of the developing countries and countries in transition: “*Good governance, reliable and secure legal framework and fight against corruption are indispensable for good climate for investments and efficient poverty reduction.*”

But it is not enough to focus only on shareholder and on economic profit – in times of growing economic globalization it is necessary to stress more than before the *social* dimension as it is one essential pillar of sustainability and Agenda 21. I am very proud that FIG has very clearly shown its commitment to this “social compensation” in its FIG Agenda 21 publication, but not only there. It is a fundamental principle of our attitude and moral. Surveyors are not pure technicians, they are part and partners of society, of politics, of state, enterprises and people whether rich or poor. Why shouldn’t we support the demand of the experienced global finance expert Köhler, whose vision and hope for the future is as follows: “*We should try to implement in the international development policy what John Rawls once has written in his book ‘A theory of justice’: To reach a fair and just society we always have to check that each activity or measure does not weak or even damage the weakest and poorest.*” Therefore the land and access to land issues are so important!

On the background of this Rawls’ “*Imperative*” I finally would like to mention how FIG, its members and partners could best “*survey the future*”: Without neglecting our furthermore urgent needed key-knowledge in basic geodetic and surveying fields, we want to continue, strengthen or even start first time our commitments to

- Urban *and* rural issues, urban *and* rural (land) development, urban *and* rural land use planning or infrastructure improvement, in urban-rural-cooperation and peri-urban areas etc. We are happy to present this week our “*Marrakech Declaration*” at the UN-Habitat Day in Nairobi. More than up to now we have to play a more crucial role in integrated and sustainable land management.
- Intensive and comprehensive *interdisciplinary approach* like it is now at the best the case in the UN Habitat Professionals Forum (chaired now by the FIG President) or by

ongoing new Memoranda of Understanding (e.g. with the UN-OOSA) or by deepened co-operations (e.g. with the IAG).

- Removing some still existing or newly happened *sectoral splittings* within our profession e.g. between surveyors and GIS people. Some prejudices exist like “*surveyors only collect data, GIS people use them*”. At the ESRI Users’ Conference 2003 there was even mentioned a gap between survey and GIS. Our FIG commissions can – and they already do – refute this wrong situation especially in the field of GIS and land management. Our FIG vision – as I have mentioned already several times – challenges surveyors for “*integrated data, land, property and construction management*”. This includes also intensified links with photogrammetry, cartography etc. There is no gap in here, but it means that we have to improve or even to start with excellent skills also in planning, legal, economic, project management and land readjustment fields. This leads to
- continuous *excellent* i.e. comprehensive *academic resp. technical education* at universities and respective technical colleges (basic geodetic knowledge plus other needs!). In Munich we aim at the range from “*the single parcel to the planet Mars*”. Secondly universities and professionals should better communicate with each other! A final remark on this academic world: The FIG academic membership should be better used by the universities!
- Life long *CPD* even in new countries like China is currently developed. China will now start with surveyors. training in the field of village renewal, rural development and land consolidation.
- *Balanced relationship* between state and private surveying activities and to an appropriate “*institutional landscape*”. This issue is essential for the economic success (“*New institutional economics*”).
- Continuous work for a *better relationship with public and politicians* (like it can happen at this conference!).

Ladies and gentlemen, surveying the past may be exciting, especially if one can find outstanding relics of the past, but it works mostly on safer conditions, instruments and measurements. Surveying the future is surely even more exciting! It means that you need visions, dreams, spirit, energy and knowledge to make your vision reality. In my home country it is said, and I have always tried to transfer it into my daily professional work with ministers, mayors, planners, surveyors, engineers and especially the citizens:

“If you are not courageous and willing enough to have a dream and energy then you will never get the power to actively do in practice.”

Dear participants, I wish you all lot of dreams, visions, knowledge and energy to contribute to a more safe, just and wealthy Indonesia, one of the biggest democracies of the world with an outstanding way of decentralization. I encourage you to contribute successfully to the development of the wonderful and fascinating Asian and Pacific region. Due to our energetic and hard working Indonesian hosts and colleagues everything is well prepared. Let's enjoy the next days.

The 3rd FIG-Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in Jakarta is herewith opened.

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